3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

322 411 [824] into Texas. Bois d'arc is commonly recognized as one of the hardest, finest, and most durable of timbers. If it was not accessible, ash, white elm, ironwood, mulberry, or hickory were used, hickory being a highly esteemed bow wood.

When selecting bow wood, the Comanche chose a small upright sapling or a piece of timber with perfectly straight grain from a large tree. The heart of the tree was never used. The timber had to be straight and as free as possible from knots. It had to be seasoned or dried and not allowed to warp in the process. It was generally worked down to approximately the desired size while still green, since green wood worked more easily. Then followed the seasoning process, requiring weeks or months for completion. With fair use a properly made bow would last for many years, but since it might be accidentally broken at any time, timber in various stages of preparation was kept on hand. After the bow wood had seasoned, it was scraped and shaped to proper dimensions and rubbed with fat or brains to make it pliable. Then the stick was put aside, preferably in a warm place, to be worked again in a few days or weeks.[7] When worked to the proper finish, it was rubbed until it acquired a polish. Glue was spread over the bow, and fresh or wet sinew from the back of a buffalo bull or deer was applied. After the sinew had been wrapped, another coat of glue was applied and smoothed down by thorough rubbing. The bow was then laid aside until perfectly dry. In drying, the fresh sinew would shrink tightly to the wood and, with the glue, made the whole very strong and tough. A common wooden bow could be made in three days, but a week to a month was usually required to finish a fancy one.

411 ●381 Glue for bows and arrows was made from chippings from the rawhide of the neck of a buffalo bull, from the shavings cut from a buffalo bull hide in the process of thinning it down, or from horns and hoofs. These were boiled with water to make a strong glue. It was lobbed upon a smoothly whittled stick of mulberry or other wood and allowed to cool. The glue stick was carried in the bow case with the arrows for ready and frequent use. By softening in hot water it was ready as an instant mender for almost anything.

[7] This method is still used in East Texas for making handles for hammers, axes, shovels, and the like.